

**Before the  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
South Slope Cooperative Telephone	)	WC Docket No. 04-347
Company, Inc.	)	(DA 04-2871)

**COMMENTS OF THE  
IOWA UTILITIES BOARD**

Comes now the Iowa Utilities Board (Iowa or Board) and, pursuant to the pleading cycle established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) offers the following comments in this matter.

On August 24, 2004, South Slope Cooperative Telephone Company, Inc. (South Slope), filed a petition pursuant to 47 U.S.C. § 251(h)(2) and 47 C.F.R. § 51.223(b) requesting that South Slope be declared an incumbent local exchange carrier (ILEC) in the three exchanges of Oxford, Tiffin, and Solon, Iowa. Iowa Telecommunications Services, Inc., d/b/a Iowa Telecom (Iowa Telecom) is the existing ILEC in these exchanges.

South Slope's petition presents certain broad issues for the Commission to consider, including the possibility that granting the petition may increase South Slope's federal universal service support. The petition may also present issues related to § 251(c) interconnection, unbundling and resale obligations; the § 251(f) rural exemption; dominant carrier regulation; equal access obligations; accounting and reporting obligations; the rights of Iowa Telecom as a displaced ILEC (if any); study area modifications; and the possible implications for long-term investment by existing ILECs in rural markets, among other issues. The

Commission's resolution of these issues may have a substantial effect on the future of telecommunications services in rural and high-cost areas.

Iowa's immediate concern, however, is limited to the question of jurisdiction. Iowa understands that South Slope's petition, and the Commission's potential action on that petition, is limited to designation as an ILEC for interstate purposes; that is, South Slope has not asked the Commission to take any action regarding South Slope's designation for intrastate jurisdictional purposes (assuming the Commission could take any such action, which it cannot). Iowa has its own statutes relating to the definition of incumbent and competitive local exchange service providers, specifically Iowa Code § 476.29 and 476.96 (2003). These classifications define the state regulatory obligations of each affected carrier, potentially including the intrastate access charges that may be tariffed by the carrier. For this reason, it is important that any action taken by the Commission with respect to South Slope's petition should be explicitly and clearly limited to South Slope's status for interstate purposes.

Respectfully submitted,

David Lynch  
General Counsel

John Ridgway  
Manager  
Telecommunications Section

Iowa Utilities Board  
350 Maple Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0069

October 4, 2004